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Role of Jawaharlal Nehru in Nation Building

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Abstract

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of nascent nation of independent India and one of the most astute statesman India has ever produced. Born in an aristocratic family, brought up and educated in the world renowned university of the country wedded to the Parliamentary Democracy, he imbibed the concepts of modernity, which inspired him in joining the movement of freedom of India launched by Gandhiji. After winning the freedom for India he became the Prime Minister and played a pivotal role in nation building. Nehru's contribution to the growth and development of country is immeasurable. Being a visionary and modernist he laid the foundation of the principles of democracy, secularism, fraternity & liberty - upon which our nation rests today. Nehru was a liberal democrat who shaped the destiny of a newly independent nation as "World's largest democracy", unlike his contemporary freedom fighters- Sukarno in Indonesia and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana- who eventually turned into dictators. He instituted and nurtured democratic institutions enshrined in the constitution of the country, which are also known as the Pillars of Democracy- Legislature, Executive, Judiciary and Free Press. He sought to strengthen them with free and fair regular elections, guaranteeing fundamental rights to everyone and following directive principles of state policy. Being a Fabian Socialist and attracted by Soviet model of centralized planning, he constituted the Planning Commission in India to propel an all-round and balanced development of the country. Nehru was not only a popular leader among the masses but also a great administrator and a parliamentarian. His dialogue with the masses and parliamentary speeches reflected his deep understanding of country's problems and his vision and confidence to solve them by taking everyone along. Nehru was meticulously involved in every aspect of nation building. His 'Letters to the Chief Ministers' can be a source of inspiration and guidance to Chief Ministers even today. His commitment to the values of secularism reflects his thorough understanding of India with diverse religious, social, cultural

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and ethnic differences, eventually leading to the unity and integrity of the nation - which are his valuable political contributions. Nehru was an active parliamentarian and under his leadership all the problems and policies concerning the nation were meticulously debated. He held Parliament in high esteem and has set an example for others by remaining invariably present when Parliament was in session. He also respected the views of the opposition and was not stubborn to accept their demands maintaining high standard of parliamentary procedure. In many western democracies, voting was a prerogative of a few elitist section of society; whereas, Nehru guaranteed Universal Adult Franchise without discrimination against gender, caste, religion, and class. Nehru being thoroughly knowledgeable with international affairs had conceived the concept of "World Federation". His vision of the international politics was to remove poverty, ignorance, slavery from the World as a whole. He believed that imperialism is responsible for these ills resulting in under-development of the newly independent nations. In the Cold War era when the World became divided into two blocs, Nehru conceived and started the Non-Alignment Movement comprising of Asian, African and some Eastern European countries, keeping equidistance from two blocs and for taking necessary steps for maintaining world peace and development of non-aligned countries. The period of Nehru is recorded in the history as "Nehruvian Era" during which democracy took the roots; and social, economic, cultural and educational development for the nation building.

This paper discusses Nehru's political legacy, particularly Democracy, Secularism, Constitution and Non-Alignment, and highlights his contribution in building a modern nation.

Key words: Jawaharlal Nehru, India, Democracy, Secularism, Constitution, Non-Alignment Movement

Introduction

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the most prominent and influential figure of the 20th century and the first Prime Minister of nascent nation of independent India. He was an astute statesman, ardent nationalist leader, a visionary, a true democrat and a modern nation builder. He was born on November 14, 1889 at Allahabad and breath his last on May 27, 1964

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becoming the longest serving Prime Minister of the country (1947–64). Nehru had the privilege of having born in an aristocratic Kashmiri Brahmin family. His father Shri. Motilal Nehru was a distinguished wealthy barrister of his time practicing in Allahabad. His mother Smt. Swaruprani Thussu also belonged to Kashmiri Brahmin family. According to (Rao, 1989) Shri. Motilal Nehru was fond of not only the western values and civilization but rather everything that was western in nature. He was also a prominent figure of nationalist movement and was the president of Indian National Congress in 1919 and 1928.

Jawaharlal Nehru was provided western environment and upbringing by his father right from the beginning. He went to receive education at the world renowned Cambridge University of Britain - the country wedded to the Parliamentary democracy, where he imbibed the concepts of modernity, which inspired him to join the India's freedom struggle movement launched by Gandhiji. According to (Patil & Narayana, 1998) it was his prolonged stay there coupled with his profound understanding of Indian history and society as well as his cosmopolitan outlook, gave him an advantage to introspect and analyze the socio-economic and political problems of India. This further led the growth of his ideology which acted as a powerful catalyst in hastening the overall nation-building process of modern India. Hence his ideology and thoughts concerning the various aspects like socio-economic, political and constitutional matters developed much prior to India's Independence.

On his return to India in 1912 he started working as a barrister in Allahabad and contributed little to the Nationalist Movement. It was however, during the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1919 that he became actively involved in Indian national movement with Mahatma Gandhi. Nehru travelled across India, went to jail several times, presided over Congress committee meetings and became a crusader for the cause of Independence for India. His contribution in freedom struggle is very significant along with others. Nehru played a key role as a leader of Indian National Congress in defining the goals and objectives and laying out the strong economic and political philosophical foundation of the organization. Scholar like Patil & Narayana, 1998 argue that it was the impact of western values, the harsh socio-economic and political realities of India, the rising aspirations of Indians, and the clash between Indian

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nationalism and Western imperialism that shaped and influenced his ideas on democracy, constitutionalism, representative government, sovereignty of people, republican polity, basic rights and liberties of citizens, citizenship, independent judiciary based on the rule of law, social-economic and political justice, imperative necessity of a just social order, secularism, cosmopolitan nationalism, internationalism and humanism. This paper discusses Nehru's political legacy and highlights his role and contribution in nation building.

Dawn of Independence: Beginning of Nehruvian Era

Pandit Jawahralal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of Independent India and ruled the hearts of his countrymen for 16 years and 286 days - till his death. Becoming the first Prime Minister of independent India was not an easy task for Nehru. He had to shape the destiny of a nation with a size of a continent, comprising of millions of poor uneducated people with diverse social, religious, economic, cultural, racial, and linguistic background. Partition – one of the bloodiest massacre in the history of mankind- which had left thousands of people homeless and had seen mammoth amount of loss of life and property was another major challenge for Nehru. Securing India's integrity and territorial boundary along with shaping a modern democratic nation was also a difficult task seen in the light of above mentioned Indian scenario.

Nehru being a socialist, an internationalist, a crusader and an ardent defender of civil liberties & rights of people shaped the destiny of nation with his vision, ideology, modern outlook and scientific temper. His thoughts and ideas on nation building changed the course of Indian society and Indian politics. Being a liberal democrat, he shaped the destiny of a newly independent nation as "World's largest democracy", unlike his contemporary freedom fighters- Sukarno in Indonesia and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana- who eventually turned into dictators. He laid the foundation of the principles of Democracy, Secularism, Fraternity & Liberty - upon which our nation rests today. He instituted and nurtured democratic institutions enshrined in the constitution of the country, which are also known as the pillars of democracy- Legislature, Executive, Judiciary and Free Press. He sought to strengthen them

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with free and fair regular elections, guaranteeing fundamental rights to everyone and following directive principles of state policy. Being a Fabian Socialist and attracted by Soviet model of centralized planning, he constituted the Planning Commission in India to spur the country's all-round and balanced development. Nehru set forth the culture of conducting non-sectarian and non-majoritarian politics within his party and government. *The four key dimensions of India's modern nationhood, as conceived and implemented by Jawaharlal Nehru, were democracy, secularism, socialism and non-alignment. They were interpreted by him in the light of our requirements, as he saw them in the mid-20th century, that is, in the aftermath of the horrors of Partition and in the glow of the first few years of Independence.* [1] This paper will discuss these four key dimensions in detail.

• **Democracy**

"Our Democracy is a tender plant which has to be nourished with wisdom and care and which requires a great deal of understanding of its real processes and its discipline. It is not just some structure which a Constitution builds up. That structure is lifeless by itself. We have to give it life and purpose. That life must be the spirit and discipline that animates us; that purpose must be a well-organized social purpose to the realization of which we bend our efforts and our energy."[2]

Nehru placed democracy in utmost regard and considered it better than dictatorship and authoritarianism. Democracy, according to him, is supposed to nurture creative spirit and release from poverty large masses of human beings. If it fails to do so, then that creative spirit can only function in a few. He considered economic democracy equally important as the political democracy. According to him Political Democracy must develop into Economic Democracy. This will lead to eradication of poverty and unemployment and bring about development. Nehru felt that "if India succeeds in achieving these results under a system of political democracy, that indeed would be a great victory not only for India but for

[1] Aiyar, M, A Vision for India, Frontline, December 12, 2014, Print Ed. http://www.frontline.in/cover-story/a-vision-for-india/article6629812.ece

[2] Khosla, M (Ed.)(2014), Letters for a Nation from Jawaharlal Nehru to his Chief Ministers 1947-1963, Penguin: India, pg-135

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democracy."[3] Nehru being a champion of democracy firmly adhered in instilling the philosophical principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in the process of nation building. According to Nehru, *Democracy was not only political, not only economic, but something of the mind…a mental approach applied to our political economic problems. It offered society something of the highest human values*.[4] Nehru had very high regards for democracy not only as a form of government but also as a way of life. Freedom without democracy had no meaning to him. Nehru wanted to shape nation's destiny as a "secular democratic" state, for which he implanted in the Constitution of India, Fundamental Rights guaranteeing Freedom of Speech and Expression, and Right to Equality to the citizens. Nehru adopted the Parliamentary democracy making people of India the source of power. Democracy was further guaranteed to the people by adopting Adult Franchise- giving every citizen Right to Vote irrespective of social, economic and political background. It should be noted that during that period right to vote was only considered a prerogative of a few elites in many western liberal democratic countries. Nehru by extending this right to all the citizens not only reaffirmed his commitment to build a democratic society but also showed his modern and progressive outlook. Conducting regular free and fair elections in country was another important step towards securing nation's democracy. Nehru's idea of democracy was not just confined to political setup. He, therefore, included the Directives Principles of State Policy in part IV of the constitution to ensure social justice and economic welfare of the people. Civil liberties were of paramount importance to Nehru and therefore, unlike his contemporaries- Sukarno of Indonesia and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, he did not turn into a dictator, but rather sought to build the nation with democratic values and principles.

Establishment of democracy in the nation is a paramount contribution of Nehru. He established and nurtured democratic institutions in the country like the Parliament, an independent judiciary, free and fair periodical elections, free press, and a non- political civil service, opposition in the parliament to strengthen and preserve the democratic spirit in the

[3] Khosla, M (Ed.)(2014), Letters for a Nation from Jawaharlal Nehru to his Chief Ministers 1947-1963, Penguin: India, pg-134
[4] Singh, R (1987), Prolegomena to a Conceptual Treatment of Nehru's View of Democracy, in Patil, VT (Ed.), Studies on Nehru, Sterling Publishers: Bangalore, Pg-54

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country. Today India proudly calls herself the 'World's largest democracy'- foundations of this democracy were laid by Nehru through his vision, ideals, and pragmatic approach. *To quote S. Gopal, "Achieved against daunting odds, democracy in India—adult suffrage, a sovereign Parliament, a free press, an independent judiciary—is Nehru's most lasting monument".*[5]

• **Secularism**

As the first Prime Minister of India, Nehru played a major role in determining and shaping the basic features of Indian society and polity. Along with democracy and constitution, Secularism is another significant contribution of Nehru to the nation. *Nehru may be described as the first intellectual thinker, who has not found it necessary to lean on religion*[6]. Having brought up and educated in modern liberal environment, and later becoming an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru had imbibed the value of secularism in his ideals and political philosophy. Nehru with his profound knowledge of history and even deeper understanding of Indian society recognized the value of secularism as one of the most important foundation for building a modern nation state. As one of the founding fathers of constitution, Nehru along with others adopted Secularism as a state policy. According to Nehru "In a country like India, which has many faiths and religions, no real nationalism can be built except on the basis of secularity. Any narrower approach must exclude a section of the population and then nationalism itself will have a restricted meaning than it should possess… We have not only to live up to the ideals proclaimed in our Constitution, but make them a part of our thinking and living and thus build up a really integrated nation. That does not mean absence of religion, but putting religion on a different plane from that of normal political and social life. Any other approach in India would mean the breaking up of India[7]." The partition had sowed the seeds of communalism in the minds of people and filled their hearts with hatred. Therefore, bringing back the sentiment of religious tolerance and the faith

[5] S Gopal, Indian Democracy: Debt to Jawaharlal Nehru, in Mukherjee Mridula, Mainstream Weekly, VOL LII, NO 23, MAY 31, 2014, http://www.mainstreamweekly.net/article4958.html

[6] Naravane V.S (1964), Modern Indian Thought: A Philosophical Survey, Asia Publishing House, New Delhi. Quoted in Joshi P C, Gandhi Nehru Tradition and Indian Secularism, Mainstream weekly, VOL XLV NO 48, Novermber 25, 2007, http://www.mainstreamweekly.net/article432.html

[7] Joshi P C, Gandhi Nehru Tradition and Indian Secularism, Mainstream weekly, VOL XLV NO 48, November 25, 2007, http://www.mainstreamweekly.net/article432.html

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of minorities in the State was of utmost importance at that time. Nehru realizing this, felt that the heterogeneous character of Indian society comprising of different religions, castes, culture, languages could be a further dividing force for the nation and detrimental to the democratic process. Gandhi and Nehru, both believed that creating a secular state and adopting secularism as a State Policy was the only way to hold the nation together. Secularism in the Indian context meant that the State does not follow any particular religion. The Indian State would be neutral to all religions and would treat all religions equally. It was also a sincere effort to separate religion from politics. To quote Nehru a Secular state "*does not obviously mean a state where religion is discouraged. It means freedom of religion and conscience including freedom for those who have no religion, subject only to their not interfering with each other or with the basic conceptions of our state… The word secular, however, conveys something much more to me, although that might not be its dictionary meaning. It conveys the idea of social and political equality. Thus, a caste-ridden society is not properly secular. I have no desire to interfere with any persons' belief but when those beliefs become petrified in caste divisions, undoubtedly they affect the social structure of the state. They, prevent us from realizing the idea of equality which we claim to place before ourselves*[8]". Realizing, the fact that religion can be a major dividing force, in order to save the democratic character of the state, Nehru nurtured secularism to the fullest. Nehru's commitment to the ideal of secularism and making sincere efforts in practicing it is one of the major reasons that a heterogeneous and socially fragmented Indian society is glued together as a nation till date. Secularism has been one of the major forces of national integration.

- **Constitution**

Leadership and ideology/ideas are two of the most formidable factors that have played a very prominent role in shaping and moulding the destinies of societies and countries[9]. Various religious, social, political, spiritual leaders and philosophers have left an imprint in the history

[8] Joshi P.C, Gandhi Nehru Tradition and Indian Secularism, *Mainstream Weekly,* VOL XLV NO 48, Sunday 25 November 2007 http://www.mainstreamweekly.net/article432.html

[9] Patil V.T & Narayana (1998), An Assessment of Nehru's Contribution to Constitution Making In India, A Study of Nehru's Ideas, Devika Publications: Delhi, pg-3

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of the nation. Jawaharlal Nehru was one such leader who shaped the nations' destiny with his modern liberal ideology. He was the architect of modern India who immensely contributed in every aspect of nation building. He was one of the founding fathers of the constitution of India. *His ideas on social, economic, political and constitutional matters were developed over a period of years preceding the advent of India's independence*[10]. He vehemently opposed the Government of India Act 1935 and demanded a charter of basic rights, democracy and popular sovereignty for people. He was in favour of electing a Constituent Assembly for shaping the Constitution of India. He was actively involved in every aspect of constitution making and played a major role in influencing and shaping it. Through Constitution, he wanted to establish a Democratic State and place the ultimate source of power in the hands of the People of India. He meticulously worked on every aspect of constitution framing. *Nehru, as a farsighted statesman and socio-political pragmatist, looked upon the Constitution as a positive instrument to rejuvenate and modernize a heterogeneous society pervaded by the forces of social primordialism, an underdeveloped polity and a backward and stagnant economy*[11]. Nehru wanted to use the Constitution as a means to emancipate people from their miseries, provide them with maximum opportunities for social welfare by securing and guaranteeing their rights and civil liberties. Nehru ensured that the Constitution represented all segments of society and not just the views of a few. Through the Constitution, Nehru made the people of the country the ultimate source of sovereignty. Fundamental Rights were guaranteed to people in the Constitution. Nehru, being a true democrat recognized the Right to Freedom, Right to Equality, Right against Exploitation, Cultural and Education Rights, and Right to Constitutional Remedies in the Constitution. Directive Principles of the State Policy were also included in the Constitution as guiding principles for the state to ensure social justice, social and economic welfare of the people. Considering India's social heterogeneity, Nehru instilled the provision of single citizenship in the Constitution to enhance the spirit of nationalism and oneness in the socially, culturally, religiously, and linguistically fragmented

[10] Patil V.T & Narayana (1998), An Assessment of Nehru's Contribution to Constitution Making In India, A Study of Nehru's Ideas, Devika Publications: Delhi, pg-3

[11] Patil V.T & Narayana (1998), An Assessment of Nehru's Contribution to Constitution Making In India, A Study of Nehru's Ideas, Devika Publications: Delhi, pg-10

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society of India. This was necessary for the overall democratic process of government and guarding India's integrity. Another important legacy of Nehru that featured in the Constitution of India is Parliamentary Democracy and the collective responsibility of the Cabinet to the Parliament. Apart from that, provision for free and fair periodical elections based on universal adult franchise was made part of Constitution to safeguard country's democracy. Independent Judiciary and Rule of Law are two other important features of Indian constitution. Nehru's commitment to uplift the poor and backward section of society finds place in the Constitution as special provisions favouring socially disadvantaged and weaker sections of the society. Nehru being a believer of Secularism and having a thorough understanding of Indian society realized the importance of constitutional safeguards for securing minorities rights to establish and administer educational institutes of their choice. Indian constitution is the longest constitution in the world and Dr. B.R Ambedkar is called the architect of the constitution. However, Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution is equally significant in shaping the constitution by influencing every aspect of Constitution with his ideals, knowledge and vision. *The system of constitutional government, the unique traditions and healthy precedents and practices built up by Nehru were in no small measure responsible for the continued existence of constitutionalism in India in the post Nehru-era as well*[12].

- **Non-aligned movement**

Another significant contribution of Nehru to India as well as the World is his theory of Non-Alignment. Along with U Nu, Sukarno, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Kwame Nkrumah and Josip Broz Tito, Nehru was the founding father of the internationally recognized Non-aligned movement. In one of his speeches at the Bangalore Session of Indian National Congress in 1960, Nehru said that "*One of the main things which in the years following independence have attracted the World's attention to India has been our broad based approach to*

[12] Patil V.T & Narayana (1998), An Assessment of Nehru's Contribution to Constitution Making In India, Nehru and Constitutionalism: An Overview, Devika Publications: Delhi, pg-105-106

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international affairs, particularly the policy of non-alignment.[13]" Following the World War II, in the Cold War era, the World was divided into two blocs led by United States and USSR. Nehru conceived and started the Non-Alignment Movement comprising of Asian, African and some Eastern European countries, keeping equidistance from two blocs and for taking necessary steps for maintaining World peace and development of non-aligned countries. The five principles of Panchsheel - Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, Mutual non-aggression, Mutual non-interference in domestic affairs, Equality and mutual benefit, Peaceful co-existence became the foundations and guiding principles of Non Aligned Movement. Through the policy of Non- Alignment, Nehru asserted India's sovereign right to choose to not be a part of any group or bloc on international front. *India reserved the right to examine every issue on merit and then decide upon action accordingly*[14]. Nehru refused to accept that "*there are only two ways of action in the World today, and one must take this way or that… I repudiate that attitude of mind. If we accept that there are only two ways, then we certainly have to join the Cold War bloc. I just do not see why the possession of great armed might or great financial power should necessarily lead to right decisions or a right mental outlook… I say this with all respect to the great countries. But I am not prepared even as an individual, much less as the foreign minister of this country, to give up my right of independent judgment to anybody else in other countries. That is the essence of our policy*."[15] Nehru gave newly independent Third World Countries a ray of hope to not indulge in Cold War and rather choose the path of peace, nation building and development. The policy of Non-alignment also had deeper implications in the international politics. It renounced the idea of any conflict or war and supported the United Nation's goal of world peace and peaceful settlement of disputes. Through Non-Alignment movement, Nehru contributed immensely in strengthening the power of nations in international system to promote World peace. *Nehru's policy of positive and dynamic non-alignment, doctrine of the*

[13] Doctor.A (1987), Nehru's Foreign Policy- A Review, in Patil. V.T(Ed.), Studies on Nehru, Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi , pp 147-159

[14] Gaur V.P (1987), Nehru's Contribution to World Civilization: A Study of the Meaning and Role of Non- Alignment, in Patil, V.T (Ed.), Studies on Nehru, Sterling Publishers: Bangalore

[15] Doctor.A (1987), Nehru's Foreign Policy- A Review, in Patil. V.T(Ed.), Studies on Nehru, Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi , pp 147-159

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Panchsheel, his unreserved support for the elimination of colonialism and imperialism all over the world and for the recognition of the right of self - determination for all peoples, and his stand for the abolition of racial discrimination were directed to the achievement of the twin objectives- the promotion of enlightened interests of India and the realization of a new world order with a new system of international relations based on rational diplomacy and permeated with the spirit of mutual tolerance and goodwill among all members of the international community.[16]

Conclusion

Becoming the first Prime Minister of independent India, Nehru had the privilege of shaping the destiny of India. He influenced every aspect of nation building through his knowledge of World affairs, grasp of Indian society, and his ideology and commitment to liberate the masses from the shackles of colonialism, slavery, poverty and hunger. *Nehru's ideology consisted of several strands such as secularism, cosmopolitan nationalism, internationalism, democratic political system, republican polity, popular sovereignty, socio-economic and political justice, rights and liberties of citizenship, protection of legitimate interests and rights of minorities, independent judiciary based on the principles of rule of law, sanctity, dignity and worth of the individual human beings, national unity and integrity, fraternity as the basis of a new social order, modernization of society, polity and economy, welfare state, legislating state, creation of a federal polity with a strong central government, socialism and development planning, non-aligned and independent foreign policy, racialism and imperialism, and establishment of a new world order based on justice, equality and fraternity, vehement opposition to the forces of social and religious obscurantism, colonialism, and resolution of conflicts by pacific or peaceful means. A look at these various strands of thought that constituted the quintessence of Nehru's ideology and its contribution to, and role in the process of the nation – building of modern india.*[17] It is difficult to list out the legacies of the

[16] Lal, N (1987), Nehru's Contribution to the Theory of International Relations, in Patil, V.T (Ed.), Studies on Nehru, Sterling Publishers: Bangalore

[17] Patil V.T & Narayana (1998), An Evaluation of Impact of Nehru's Ideology, A Study of Nehru's Ideas, Devika Publications: Delhi, pg-434

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architect of modern India since his contribution to the nation is immense and not just confined to democracy, secularism, constitution and non-alignment. Nehru was a great administrator. Realizing India's need to accelerate the growth process to become a self-sufficient nation, Nehru developed the Soviet model of centralized planning. Under his leadership he constituted the Planning Commission in India for all-round and balanced development of the country. He also invested in building infrastructure, particularly Dams- which he called the 'temples' of modern India. Higher education also received adequate attention during his tenure. His 'Letters to the Chief Ministers' can be a great source of inspiration and guidance to the Chief Ministers even today. Nehru was an active parliamentarian and under his leadership all the problems and policies concerning the nation were meticulously debated. He held Parliament in high esteem and has set an example for others by remaining invariably present when parliament was in session. He also understood the importance of the Opposition in the Parliamentary Democracy and as such respected their views. He was not stubborn to accept the views of the Opposition and thereby maintaining high standard of parliamentary procedure. Today Pandit Nehru has become a controversial figure being discussed and written about everywhere. Nehru is often compared with his contemporaries by his opponents who argue that had he not been the PM, the scenario of India would have been better. A section of people blame him for all the misfortunes and problems of the country. He is blamed for a weak foreign policy which resulted in war defeat against China in 1962. His idea of centralized planning is also criticized for resulting in slow growth rate on economic front; mass illiteracy resulting due to non-implementation of universal primary education programmes. However, it would be a very unfair, narrow and prejudiced evaluation of him, without appreciating him in the context of a newly independent nation which had to combat the problems of partition, abject poverty, hunger, malnourishment, unemployment, illiteracy, social and economic inequality and many more ills.

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